

IN THE SPECIFICATION (as originally filed):

On page 1, after line 2 please insert the following:

This is the U.S. national phase of International Application No. PCT/DE03/02684
filed August 8, 2003, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE DISCLOSURE

Field of the Disclosure

The paragraph beginning on page 1, line 4 has been changed as follows:

The invention disclosure relates to a method for the conveyance of postal items using
an electronic parcel compartment system in which, when a mailpiece is deposited, the
electronic parcel compartment system records identification information that identifies the
mailpiece and/or it generates said identification information, and in that, during subsequent
processing steps of the mailpieces, the identification information is recorded and/or evaluated
in a data processing unit that stores transport data, and the identification information is stored
in the electronic parcel compartment system and/or in a central data processing unit.

On page 1, after line 4 please insert a heading as follows:

Related Technology

The paragraph beginning on page 1, line 4 has been changed and new paragraphs added as follows:

A method of this type is known from French patent application FR 2 563 987. In this prior-art method, mailpieces are transported to an electronic parcel compartment system. The recipients of the mailpiece can identify themselves as being authorized recipients at the electronic parcel compartment system and they can then remove the parcel.

Moreover, WO 01/31593 A1 discloses a locker system for delivering ordered shipments in which the shipments are identified by means of an identification code. When a shipment is picked up by a recipient, the recipient is identified and a payment for the shipment can be carried out or initiated at the compartment system. In addition to the delivery of shipments, the original recipient can also use the compartment system to return shipments. Here, when such returns are deposited, preferably the identification assigned to the shipment is likewise recorded and the original recipient is credited for the amount of the original purchase price of the ordered product.

WO 01/00069 A2 discloses a postbox in which shipments for a recipient can be deposited. Preferably, the postbox belongs to the recipient in question or else he can rent it for a certain period of time. Here, it is also possible for several shipments to be deposited consecutively into a box. The checking procedure for authorizing the opening of the postbox can involve not only the checking of the identification of the deliverer or recipient but also access can be denied, for example, if there is already an object of great value in the box. The postbox is also suitable for the owner to deposit shipments for pick-up and for delivery by a delivery service. Here, the owner can place the shipment into the postbox and the calculation of the fee charged for the transport can be entered by the owner, after which the amount is debited from his account. In another disclosed embodiment, the deliverer removes the shipment, determines the requisite transport fee, franks the shipment as necessary, and initiates the debiting of the transport fee from an account of the owner.

WO 01/52199 A2 discloses an electronic compartment system for the depositing of shipments for pick-up by an authorized recipient. When a shipment is picked up by a recipient, the identification of the recipient is checked and, if applicable, a payment for the shipment can be effected at the compartment system. The payment can be made, for example, by inserting money directly into the machine or else the payment can be debited from a user

account, whereby the amount to be paid can depend on the size of the compartment and/or on the duration of the rental. The compartment system also allows the recipient to send shipments back. In this case, the original recipient places the shipment into a compartment and a deliverer is informed that a shipment has been deposited for pick-up.

WO 01/141605 A3 describes a device for accepting shipments, said device preferably being in the area of the owner of the device. The device has a closed area for depositing small mailings such as letters, which can be inserted, for example, through a conventional mailbox slit. As a complement to this, the device has a second closed area into which or from which authorized persons can deposit or remove larger shipments such as parcels.

Moreover, DE 100 33 664 A1 discloses a device and a method for delivering ordered goods in the absence of the recipient. Here, preferably at the time of the ordering of the goods, the deliverer receives an identification key with which he is authorized to open the storage device. The access key is preferably invalid after being used and consequently can only be used once.

On page 1, after line 10 please insert a heading as follows:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The paragraphs beginning on page 1, line 12 have been changed as follows:

The ~~invention is based on the objective of disclosure further developing develops~~ the prior-art method in such a way that a better utilization of the capacities of the electronic parcel compartment system is achieved.

According to the ~~invention, this objective is achieved in that disclosure,~~ when a mailpiece is deposited, the electronic parcel compartment system records identification information that identifies the mailpiece and/or it generates said identification information,

and in that, during subsequent processing steps of the mailpieces, the identification information is recorded and/or recorded and evaluated in a data processing component that stores transport data.

The execution according to the invention of the disclosed method, or the configuration according to the invention of the and electronic parcel compartment system, make it possible to use the electronic parcel compartment system to accept mailpieces and to subsequently forward the mailpieces to recipients outside of the service area of the electronic parcel compartment system.

This means in particular that the The electronic parcel compartment system can be used for dispensing mailpieces as well as for receiving mailpieces. In this manner, storage capacities of the electronic parcel compartment system as well as the transportation space in means of transportation such as, for example, vehicles, are used more effectively for the conveyance of the mailpieces.

The paragraphs beginning on page 2, line 17 have been changed as follows:

Preferably, the invention method allows the most flexible possible filling of the compartments as well as the utilization of the fact that the available storage capacity of the electronic parcel compartment system is increased in that mailpieces meant for further transport in the logistic system have been removed.

An In an especially preferred embodiment of the invention is characterized in that, the identification information is recorded when the mailpiece is deposited as well as when the mailpiece is removed from the electronic parcel compartment system.

The paragraphs beginning on page 3, line 5 have been changed as follows:

In an especially preferred embodiment ~~of the invention~~, before being delivered to the parcel compartment system, all of the mailpieces already have the identification code and/or the address sticker. This is especially the case with returned items.

~~An in another~~ especially preferred embodiment ~~of the invention is characterized in that,~~ the same means can be used for the transmission of the event information about the delivery and/or pick-up of mailpieces that can also be used for the transmission of the identification information.

The paragraph beginning on page 4, line 8 has been changed as follows:

It is especially advantageous if the customer with the parcel acceptance function has the possibility to select a sender within the Deutsche Post World Net corporation. For example, after the shipment has been properly deposited, the customer can preferably choose between several types of delivery. Here, for instance, a '*normal delivery*' and an '*express delivery*' can be available as choices. If the customer selects '*express delivery*[]', he might then be requested to pay an appropriate additional amount by means of an EC card or money card. The procedure in the case of an express delivery can then, for example, be that the electronic parcel compartment system triggers a notification (by SMS or e-mail) with the necessary information (where the shipment can be picked up, by when the shipment has to be delivered where, ...) to the logistic company. Consequently, with the modality of express deliveries, a prompt pick-up of the shipment can be ensured.

On page 4, after line 19 please insert a heading as follows:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS